[Idma]
[Ait Lh'sen]

619 /48 cont./

778 The domain of the Idma thus embraces the three most im-
634 portant sanctuaries of the upper Seksawa: Ammern to the E., in
the extension of the Ad'erd'ur ravine, Assttif to the W., Lalla
[484] Aziza on the bisector. A five-hour walk separates the two ex-
treme sanctuaries. On the other hand, longitudinally, it is nec-
essary to figure four hours between Lalla Aziza and Igersafen.
Therefore this domain extends over a space that we could esti-
mate at the value of a whole day's walk in order to be probed in
619 all directions. That is a great deal for a little montagnard state.

175 The Idma are in fact conquerors. "We had only 700 armed
701 men," they say, "when the a: Gasa were double that number.
726 But we conquered them, with the help of Lalla Aziza." In mod-
ern times, a regular line of chiefs, alternating among two or
634 three families, could combine the principle of assembly co-opta-
619 tion, the great assemblies of Inraren z'dinin, with the impetus of
the individual. The chronicle of these alternations have re-
634 mained for us. Today masters of the territory of three zaouias,
181 having known how to insert themselves smoothly into the French
619 peace, obstinate, proud, miserly, the Idma continue their tena-
cious aspiration to exist as a group and, in short, their taking in
charge the former destiny of the Seksawa.

619 /49/ The Domain of the Ait Lh'sen

174 Like the Idma, they are conquerors. They also seem to have
166 arrived from the Sous by way of the Tizi n Trga and, from there,
634 to have swerved toward the N. and the N.-W. up to encountering
131 the high bar of the Bwibaun, limit of the Seksawa toward the W.,
symmetrical with that of the Afuzar toward the E.

133 To the S., the length of the axial chain, they comprise two
101 cantons entirely similar to the Iguntar and to the a. Mh'nd, be-
634 tween which they are intercalated. These are Iwulla and
619 Wanz'id', backed up to the wall which, from the 3,000 meters of
the Zkkat', separates the Seksawa from the I. u Mh'mud. One who
looks toward the N. from the flank of the Zkkat' distinguishes three
valleys still recent in form and which two bulges of earth separate:
the one ending at Amudder, the other constituting the mole of

/92 cont./

114 That was the object of the masterly work of /93/ R. Montagne. It rests on a comparativism extended to the whole Moroccan Berbère world and, locally, on the direct observations undertaken by our first officers. Among them stand out R. Montagne himself, Justinard, de La Chapelle, Dupas, de Saint-Bon. Involved in the reconnaissance which preceded, accompanied, amplified the pacification, they were struck by the antagonism of the small republics and the great caids. The coming-and-going from one form to the other, they studied it in the very act and from this disentangled historical and practical information. The incidents, if they have varied, are not exhausted even today. Therefore it
121 is not only because it was admirably thorough, but also because certain of these lessons remain topical that this investigation will not be continued by our work. But it goes without saying that it will provide it with substantial cross-checking on what I call the stage of arrival, that is, the first quarter of the twentieth century.

175 At this time, the political life of the Seksawa was ordered
721 according to sections echeloned from downstream to upstream.
● [701] At each level stretch, a military division was on the move in conquering pushes. For some of them they only lacked luck in order to stretch from the Haouz to the Sous, like Glawa, Gund'afa, Mtugga.

In the high mountains, the a. H'adduyws extended their enterprises from the Aghbar to the Idaw Mh'mud. In the middle valley, the Idma and the Imt'ddan were ambitious for the Haut Dwiran and the middle valley of the asif el-Mal. The a. Lh'sen had a man of war, Caid Lmokhtar, who dominated for a time from the a. Musa to the Iguntar. Still lower, the a. Abdella tried their hand at the role of precursor of the plains power, officials or conquerors: a wise conciergerie /caretaker's post/ tactic.

616 These individual silhouettes (1)

[121]
[113]

1. We have studied them from the viewpoint of the psychological documentation that they

/425 cont./
616 is transposed to a wholly moral plane, the "law" is observed in
121 most of the societies (2).

2. Cl. Lévi-Strauss, "La politique étrangère d'une société primitive /The foreign policy of a primitive society/," Politique étrangère, 1949, p. 151; "Histoire et ethnologie," Revue de métaphysique et de morale, 1949, pp. 373 sq.

It assuredly accounts for multiple Maghrebi facts, but, let us keep in mind, less in their specificity than in that they obey an almost universal dialectic. Now, what will interest us here is in what and how these formations are Maghrebi.

616 One could argue that the Arabic word leff belongs to the local
[192] vocabulary (3),

3. Les Textes arabes du Sous, by Destaing, mention the word in the index, but it does not figure in any text. Cf., however, Sources in., Port., first series, t. III, p. 199 (apropos a confederation of tribes).

if it were not found again in an incontestable document, a letter from the amghar Umulid, in the sense of "party," of "coalition," this itself from the Chleuh /Shluh/ word amqqun, from the root
[571] qq.n, "to bind." But amqqun is understood here as the military
[701] alliance, either a lasting coalition or an episodic combination in view of an expedition. The more general group-to-group relations are rendered rather by the qualification of aitma, "brothers."
571 These are "fraternities," creating or verifying an imprecise, but
616 bilateral obligation. Their force, diminishing in proportion as its
[695] field of application is extended, is locally connected with that of collective solidarities that are exercised on the occasion of plural oaths. The latter, it is true, involve in the first place the agnates.

*634 /231 cont./
184 of the "taqbilt," itself gives evidence of the constant anarchy by
578 its external aspect; the scattered and isolated houses give it the
361 appearance of a little corner of the Rif.

*634 VIII. The internal and external wars. -- During the fights
616 that the cantons of the two leffs of the Haut-Atlas /High Atlas/
•701 wage against one another, the small Berbère /Berber/ states do
726 not designate any military leaders. The moqaddem acts as one. Each "taqbilt" fights in dispersed order, in the inextricable confusion that results from the entanglement of the two alliances. Even in the most serious circumstances, when the independence of the high mountains is threatened by the forces of the Makhzen /makhzan/ or the neighboring kaids, the state of division of the country does not generally allow designating a single leader in this region. The Ida Ou Tanan themselves, whose constitution
[648] is so strong and so respected, summoned by Moulay el Hasan in 1888 to show their submission by the sending of presents, knew very well how to come to an arrangement, in spite of the efforts of their notables or their amghars, to refuse that homage to the sovereign; but the mass of the warriors who had decided to reject the authority of the Makhzen could oppose to the Sultan's harkas only efforts that were poorly contrived and dedicated in advance to failure. In the same way, at the time of the conquest of the Aghbar by the kaids of Tagontaft, the four fractions of the high valley, habitually divided, united for an instant and imposed silence on the leff disputes that put them in opposition; but no leader appeared capable of directing a resistance, which was nevertheless heroic and obstinate (1).

1. Cf. Revue des Études islamiques, 1927, p. 231; Hespéris, 1927, p. 24.

*634 /232/ In the cantons remaining faithful to the regime of
701 assemblies and moqaddems, it seems that the greatest perils can-
726 not give rise to a man of war capable of saving them from danger. So, most often, the independent tribes close themselves up in a
*634
648

*634 /344 cont./
*631 lord are entrusted to the "bab inebgioun," director of hospitality,
712 charged with ensuring their sustenance and that of their mounts.
[574] A doorkeeper, the "abouwab" (1),

1. From the Arabic bouwab, doorkeeper.

keeps the key to the women's house and has the "mouna," the daily food, taken to them. Finally several "moqaddem" are put in charge of the field crops and the immense orchards, acquired recently and by every means, in the best parts of the valley.
[466] They are the ones who assemble the corvées furnished by the tribes for the plowing and harvesting, and who see to the threshing and to the ensilage of the grain.

*631 At Tagontaft or at Talat n Yaqoub, we find all these various
*634 jobs still held in our day by the sons of the companions of the
571 amghar Mohammed. At present one scarcely sees appear among
[178] the kaid's confidential men a few young persons from the leff of the "Aït Atman." Their fathers met death in the struggles at the beginning; their possessions have been "eaten" and their villages destroyed, but they end up by rallying to a regime that resists time. It is they who, in the newly conquered tribes, will make the kaid's orders respected, and their loyalty is guaranteed in all circumstances by the presence of their households humbly established close to the master's house.

*631 /345/ Thus, to the small army of mercenaries at the begin-
*634 ning comes to be added, little by little, a troop of volunteers
•701 chosen from the tribe of origin. A few slaves serve as the balance
[567] in order to constitute a reliable group, entrusted on distant expeditions to a caliphate, relative or ally of the master. The tribes already subdued each bring their contingents commanded by kaids and sheiks, and without any pay they remain at the disposal of the caliphate for the duration of the war. These auxiliaries have, then, no resources to live on other than the ones that pillage gives.

*631 IX. The financial resources. The kaid, master of the lands.
652 -- But the extension of the power thus organized brings to the
701
648
*634

*634 /345 cont./
*631 makhzen /makhzan/ leader only new burdens. In order to equip
652 his mokhaznis, supply them with arms, buy the complicity of
[648] the minor chiefs of the vicinity, and struggle at the court of the
[701] Makhzen against the dangerous influences of the nearby great chiefs by distributing considerable sums to the great ones, new resources are always needed. It is then necessary to impose on
[651] the tribes extraordinary contributions, "frida," to buy the lands
[728] from the ruined inhabitants or, better, to confiscate them, when villages have been destroyed and the families exiled. Hundreds
[567] of slaves are bought to cultivate these abandoned fields. The retinue of the house does not cease to grow. In proportion as the importance of the domains and of the command increases, the intermediaries also become more and more numerous, the harvests and the taxes melt away in their hands, and the chief receives no more than a small part of them.

[619] With an ever-increasing ambition, the kaid then tries to get,
[661] by force or by intrigue, to establish himself in the richest tribes in the vicinity, while the ruin of the ones that he already commands is consummated.

[466] Corvées, taxes, and fines are multiplied indeed, and, in
[651] order to find the money required by the mokhaznis, the peasants
[681] come to the casbah to sell their unripe harvests, their almonds in bloom, and to pawn their fields. Against the urgent necessity of
[571] finding resources, no consideration can hold if it is not that of
[557] keeping intact the very organization of the command by treating with respect the few families whose fate is bound up with that of the kaid. So the great concern of the chief is to acquire goods by every means. If this regime could continue /346/ to endure, the kaid, with his brothers, would come to possess all the lands of the country.

*634 Doubtless in the beginning preferential treatment is still re-
*631 served in the Asif Nefis for the "Aît Iraten," among whom the
616 Gontafi found so many allies; but later, when the memory of the
652 institution of the leffs is almost lost, after 40 years of internal
178 peace, the friendly cantons of the past will end up by being sub-
557 ject to the common regime of the "frida" and corvées. Only the

/381 cont./

175 where they scatter "like boats on the sea," they get rich and for-
159 get their internal dissensions.

*63 Having become powerful, ᶜAbdallah Ou Bihi feels cramped
648 in his casbah of the Azaghar. He has another one constructed,
619 larger than the first one, a few kilometers away on the brow of
[712] the mountain of Amhach. This fortress, in ruins today, contained a large house defended by borjs; cisterns and vaulted storehouses built with care, to which the marabouts themselves came to pay the tithe, which indicates to us quite well their state of
[466] abasement. Between the two casbahs stretched a large space planted with olive trees, and all the tribes participated by corvées in the construction of an immense enceinte wall of dry stones, intended to shelter the kaid's crops. Then around the house of the Azaghar grow the dwellings of the relatives of ᶜAbadallah Ou Bihi. Finally, hundreds of black slaves cultivate the fields. By the material aspects of his establishment, the Makhzen leader seems to live and act like a mountain kaid.

But if one examines carefully the organization of the great chief's power, one sees how much it differs from that of the other Berbère /Berber/ chiefs whose appearance and development we have studied. ᶜAbdallah Ou Bihi is not established on the lands of his enemies, but on those of the Makhzen. His only rival is the kaid of the Mtougga, but, in order to fight him and put him to flight, he must wait patiently for the "siba" that follows the Sultan's death. He does not confiscate the possessions of the defeated, but in each tribe he has the dead fields, taken over by
[651] forest, cleared by fire. Everyone owes him two days of tillage
[466] and three days of harvesting, which are enough for him to have his silos filled, set up under the guard of an "amin."

175 The great kaid, ceaselessly at the head of his horsemen,
159 travels through the tribes. This group that he calls his "makhzen,"
*63 however, is not made up of the warriors of a privileged canton, it
619 is formed of Haha of various origins. The ones that he prizes
•701 most are those of the Ida Ou Gourd, for the most part of Arab origin, because they are hard in combat; he can, in any circumstance, use 100 horsemen and 300 foot soldiers, who are all

/381 cont./

175 volunteers and whom he has sometimes chosen from among the
159 sons of his harshest enemies. The Aït Zelten, of the kaid's tribe
*631 of origin, are the least numerous; living in a country that is not
619 as poor, they are mostly /382/ unsuited for war and have a repu-
701 tation only for living well and eating well.

Finally, the functionaries of the casbah, who in the case of
175 the Berbère /Berber/ amghar are taken from the village of origin,
159 here originate indiscriminately from the various tribes of the com-
*631 mand; the chiefs of harkas and the caliphates come especially
619 from the warlike tribe of the Ida Ou Gourd. No caliphates in the
712 territory of the confederation, nor houses of mokhaznis in charge of collecting the "frida." On the contrary, one finds in each khoms proven sheiks, coming from old families, who will keep power for more than 20 years, and it is they who, after the death of the great chief, will receive the succession and give the country numerous minor kaids.

175 The domination of El Hajj ᶜAbdallah Ou Bihi in his own
159 country thus appears to us less violent than that of the chiefs of
*631 the Atlas over the tribes that they conquered. The union of the
648 Haha is realized by the authority of a chief whom the Makhzen
619 /makhzan/ supports with its distant, but nevertheless feared power; besides, the harmony of the tribes is cemented above all by the attraction exerted on the warriors of the country by the lucrative missions carried out in the Sous plain in order to collect the sultan's tax. As soon as that source of profit has dried up and El Hajj ᶜAbdallah Ou Bihi has been killed by the sultan's poison, the whole country will go back to anarchy, to internal struggles, to the extravagant ambitions of the minor chiefs, and the work of 20 years of efforts will disappear without leaving a trace.

The tragic end of the great chief of the Haha suffices to show us how much his effort was strictly limited and watched over by the Makhzen. Having grown important more easily thanks to sherifian prestige, he is at the same time destined to know immediate ruin if disgrace strikes him.

El Hajj ᶜAbdallah Ou Bihi had not continued, with respect to the Tazerwalt, the policy of furious war waged in former times by Aghennaj.

4: Hoffman E-4 (no date) 1967 MW11 Shluh MW11 (ca. 1900)

the southern Shluh groups) or of the tribe. These higher officials customarily carried the title of *amghar* (a Berber word derived from the root *mqour*, signifying "to be great or important") and of *sheikh* – these titles also appearing in such combination as *amghar n'tuga* ("chief of the grass"), *sheikh er rbi'a* ("chief of the spring, grass[?]"), and *sheikh el 'am* ("chief of the year"). In most cases these chiefs held office for only one year, though in some cases they could be reelected for a second term. Among the Ait Outferkal (605), however, the term of office corresponded in years to the number of divisions in the district responsible for appointing the tribal chief. More recently each district of this tribe has had a separate chief appointed for life – this is also the situation in many of the sub-Saharan regions explored by Foucauld. Among most Berber groups it was customary for the district or tribal president to remain in office for longer than a year if a war developed during his term of office, and if he proved himself to be a capable leader. Only in time of war did he have any real power (Loubignac, 1942, pp. 281-282).

To be eligible for the post of tribal chieftain an individual generally had to be a native of the tribe, although long residence therein (40 years or so) sometimes could substitute for this requirement. The applicant also had to have experience in high public office; this and the previous requirements limited the circle of candidates to include only the tribal notables. The actual selection of the tribal *amghar* was almost always the prerogative of the *jemaa* – the only exceptions being among the Ait Mehammed (606) in the area of Azilal, and at Boudenig (in the area of the Ait Izdeg du Guir [438]), where the tribes have delegated the responsibility of choosing their leaders to holy men. Here and elsewhere, the selection is customarily made in the spring. Among the Ait Ichkern (416), for example, the incumbent *amghar* at this time notifies a conference of notables known as *asifed* ("return of powers") that his term is about to expire, and calls the tribe together for the ceremony known as the *taalamt*, for which he fixes the date. At the appropriate time delegations from all the divisions of the tribe assemble at the designated site with their tents, horses, and servants, accompanied *en masse* by the tribes-people. The preliminary festivities,

4: Hoffman E-4 (no date) 1967 MW11 Shluh MW11 (ca. 1900)

retained by the *jemaa*, for this body is often reluctant to delegate completely its authority and functions. In theory, and generally in practice, however, the *amghar* represents the tribe in its dealings with neighbouring and foreign social units; protects the interests of the community and the customs and laws of each unit; executes the decisions of the *jemaa*; proposes measures of general communal interest and certain public utilitarian projects, such as irrigation works; oversees the seasonal migrations, or establishes the schedule for planting and harvest; fixes the contribution to be made by each group in money or goods for the maintenance of the public works; acts as administrator of the tribal treasury if there is one (this is particularly the case among the *ksar* of southern Morocco); and, finally, being responsible for public order and safety, supports the police and applies the schedule of fines (Johns Hopkins University, 1956, pp. 228-229; Loubignac, 1942, p. 283).

The powers of the *amghar* are somewhat more extensive in the military sphere, particularly in time of war. He has the authority to compel each division to buy a certain number of horses and guns; together with the tribal *jemaa* he determines the size of the contingent to be furnished by each group and the supplies to be carried, as well as the place of combat and, in case of success, the division of spoils (Johns Hopkins University, 1956, p. 229; Loubignac, 1942, pp. 283-284).

The fluid and often vague separation of powers and responsibilities between the *jemaa* and the *amghar* acts, as may be expected, as a severe restraint upon initiative in leadership.

... La confusion des pouvoirs était grande; l'assemblée des notables, qui les détenait tous, n'abdiquait pas volontiers entre les mains d'un seul; égalitaire à l'excès, elle se montrait résolument hostile à toute tentative de pouvoir personnel; aussi contrôlait-elle avec méfiance les initiatives de l'Amrhar, de sorte qu'il n'osait rien entreprendre sans la consulter; l'autorité de chef était discutée dès qu'elle voulait s'affirmer; elle dépendait moins de son titre que de sa situation personnelle, de son prestige, de la fermeté de son caractère, de la puissance de ses proches, de la crainte qu'il savait à l'occasion inspirer; la situation de ses répondants, ses représentants dans les fractions, était encore moins assise. Dans cette confusion, chacun s'occupait de tout, et le nombre des interlocuteurs obscurcissait encore le débat. Pour éviter des froissements qui auraient entraîné de graves incidents, on s'efforçait de réaliser l'unani-